



Memorandum

To: Mayor Ruthanne Fuller
From: Councilors Marc Laredo, Emily Norton, John Oliver, David Kalis, Pamela Wright, Julia Malakie, Joshua Krintzman, R. Lisle Baker, Tarik Lucas, Maria Greenberg, Deborah Crossley, Susan Albright, Andreae Downs, Richard Lipof, Leonard Gentile, and Christopher Markiewicz
Cc: City Council; Acting City Clerk Nadia Khan
Re: Vaccinations for City and School Employees
Date: August 23, 2021

In light of the growing number of cases of COVID-19, both here in Newton and across the Commonwealth, we thank you for mandating that masks be worn in all municipal buildings. We are writing to urge you to take two additional steps: (1) expand the mask mandate to include indoor spaces in all school buildings and all private businesses that are open to the public; and (2) require all city and school employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19 (with exceptions for employees with demonstrated medical conditions or sincerely held religious beliefs that cannot be reasonably accommodated).

While we have a relatively high rate of vaccinations in Massachusetts, and especially in Newton, it is not enough. Recently, Governor Baker issued an order requiring tens of thousands of state workers to be vaccinated. In the August 23, 2021 edition of *The Boston Globe*, the president of the Museum of Science explained why it had issued a vaccine mandate for all employees: “Leaders of institutions, cities, states, and nations cannot wait for complete agreement when the consequence of inaction is death or serious risk. They must follow the evidence if it tips strongly in favor of taking action.” We believe that Newton should be a leader at the municipal level and be similarly bold.

We are cognizant of the legal and collective bargaining issues involved in this decision. But our collective lives and economic well-being are at stake. Now is the time to follow the evidence. We must beat COVID-19 and the only way to do so is if we are all vaccinated.

Thank you for all you are doing to keep our residents, workers, and visitors safe.